

Lebanon County Criminal Justice Advisory Board
Minutes of the Meeting of December 11, 2023

Time: 9:00 a.m.

Place: Second Floor Conference Room, MH/ID/EI, 220 East Lehman St., Lebanon

Present

Pier Hess Graf, District Attorney and CJAB Chair; Holly Leahy, MH/ID/EI Administrator and CJAB Vice Chair; Honorable John C. Tylwalk, President Judge; Robert J. Phillips, County Commissioner; Stephanie Axarlis, Court Administrator; Tina Litz, LCCF Warden; Jonathan Hess, Police Chiefs Representative; James Donmoyer, Director, Commission on Drug and Alcohol Abuse; Jamie Wolgemuth, County Administrator; Christopher Frye, Probation Services; LeAnne Burchik, Executive Director, Domestic Violence Intervention; Tara Fancovic, Domestic Relations; Karen Raugh, Executive Director, County Housing Authority; and, John P. Shott, CJAB Planner.

Absent

Erin Moyer, Director, Children and Youth; Carla Cyr, Veterans Justice Outreach; Jeffrie Marley, Sheriff; Megan Tidwell, Chief Public Defender; and, Kim Mackey, CJAB Regional Representative.

Guests

Theresa Johnson, Step Into Life Ministries; Norma Gonzalez, SARCC; Michael Schroeder, NAACP Lebanon County; Glenda Folsom, P.R.O.B.E.

Proxy entered for the record: Tara Fancovic, Deputy Director, for Michael Anderson, Director of Domestic Relations; Christopher Frye, Deputy Director, Adult Unit, for Audrey Fortna, Director of Probation Services.

CJAB Chair Pier Hess Graf called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. Presence of a quorum noted.

Minutes of October 9, 2023 CJAB Meeting—Approved on a motion by Ms. Leahy, seconded by Mr. Donmoyer

The Chair welcomed all guests to the meeting and introduced today’s guest speaker, Ms. Theresa Johnson, Community Engagement Coordinator for Step Into Life Ministries. Ms. Johnson showed a video that gave everyone in attendance an overview of Step Into Life’s mission and the work the organization performs for those in need. Constituents served includes offenders, those in recovery, disabled veterans, and homeless persons. Major emphasis on reentry and aftercare. The organization receives no government or grant funding, relying solely on donations. Step Into Life operates transitional housing, currently serving 15 men. Individuals receiving assistance from Step Into Life are not referred to as clients, but as “family members.” Ms. Johnson was available for Q & A following the presentation.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

- **D.U.I. Court**—At present, 34 offenders are actively participating in the program, with seven applicants pending.

- **Prison Reduction**—Current Average Daily Population (ADP) is 272. 19 inmates are currently involved in the Medical Assisted Treatment (MAT) program. The Warden is addressing security issues that arise when transporting inmates who are participating in the program.

On September 19, the County submitted a \$35,990 CJAB-Coordinated grant application to PCCD for enhanced COVID testing/mitigation at the LCCF. The application remains “under review” by PCCD.

- **Mental Health**—To date, Team M.I.S.A. has discussed the cases of 43 unduplicated individuals. Statistical breakdown: all 43 have current or a history of mental health issues; four have an intellectual-disabilities diagnosis; 17 have current or a history of drug/alcohol abuse; two are veterans; and ten are currently or have been chronically homeless. Team M.I.S.A. is focusing on their role and how to better evolve as a team. This includes more effective tracking and documentation. The next step is for MH/ID/EI to develop a short survey about the team’s direction, and to meet individually with each core member of the team to discuss the survey questions.

The number of confirmed suicides as of November 6 is 20. Statistical breakdown: average age was 46.7, with the oldest being 95 and the youngest (2) being 18; 17 males, three females; 10 by firearm; two veterans; six from outside Lebanon County (all from Lancaster County); 13 had known mental-health histories, eight had known substance-abuse issues; 16 white, two Hispanic, one unsure, one Dominican.

The County-owned cottage behind the MH/ID/EI building is now fully occupied, with three female residents. So far, things are going well.

- **Veterans Court**—Current number of active participants is 19, with one offender about to be accepted into the program: four applicants under consideration.
- **Drug Court**—Current number of active participants is 21, with one offender scheduled to be accepted into the program. Five applications under review. The President Judge noted that the Drug Court Program gives offenders a solid opportunity to avoid incarceration and get their lives back on track.

CJAB DEPARTMENTS: REPORTS AND ISSUES OF INTEREST

Day Reporting Center—The contract between the County Commissioners and PA Counseling Services, Inc. ends on Dec. 31, 2023, effectively ending the program. Probation Services and PA Counseling will meet on 12-19 to discuss alternative programming for those few offenders now assigned to the DRC.

Heroin Task Force—Confirmed overdose deaths as of November 4 is 31, exceeding last year’s total of 29. Statistical breakdown: 22 involved fentanyl, one involved xylazine; 23 from 17042/17046 area codes, four from Palmyra area, one from Annville; 18 males, 13 females; oldest victim was 75, youngest was 25; average age was 46; 20 white, eight Hispanic, one Dominican; two unreported.

Offender Reentry Coalition—PCCD recently sent a survey to CJAB planners inquiring about the status of their reentry programs. A reminder that PCCD places a strong emphasis on reentry and expects counties to do likewise. Christine Hartman, the new Administrator of Community Action Partnership, is focusing on reinvigorating the Offender Reentry Coalition. Encouraging news is that the County is

about to post the position for a part-time Reentry Coordinator. The person in this position is also a core member of the CJAB.

ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

- ***Voting (Core) and Non-Voting Members***—Members discussed proposed guidelines for including non-voting members on the CJAB:

Organizations are eligible to apply to become non-voting members of the Lebanon County Criminal Justice Advisory Board (LCCAB). To be considered for non-voting membership, the organization must be a 501c3 or 501c4 organization or a local chapter of a national agency or corporation. The applicant agency must also have a Board of Directors, member, bylaws, and meeting minutes. These requirements must be documented by the entity applying for non-voting membership.

An application for non-voting membership shall include a letter of intent and required documentation and must be transmitted to the CJAB Planner or CJAB officers at least two weeks prior to the meeting at which the application is to be considered.

An application for non-voting membership must be approved by a two-thirds consensus of the core members attending the meeting at which the motion is to be raised. The vote may be conducted by paper balloting, if requested by a core member.

The core members have the authority to review non-voting membership at any time and may remove such members who fail to attend CJAB meetings on a consistent basis.

On a motion by Mr. Wolgemuth, seconded by Ms. Leahy, the Board authorized Mr. Shott to prepare a proposed amendment to the bylaws, providing for non-voting membership and based on the above guidelines. Mr. Shott will send the core members a draft of the amendment no later than two weeks prior to the February 5, 2024, CJAB meeting.

- ***Strategic Planning for 2024 and Beyond***—PCCD is urging all CJABs in the Commonwealth to review and update their strategic plans. Regular strategic planning is expected of CJABs to remain in compliance with PCCD’s minimum operating standards. The current plan ends at the end of 2023, so it behooves the Board to identify priorities for at least the next two years. Mr. Shott will prepare an end-of-year report.

NEW BUSINESS

Election of CJAB Officers for 2024—On a motion by Warden Litz, seconded by President Judge Tylwalk, the members elected Pier Hess Graf to serve as Chair and Holly Leahy to serve as Vice Chair of the CJAB in 2024.

Approval of CJAB Meeting Dates for 2024—On a motion by Ms. Burchik, seconded by Ms. Leahy, the members approved the following meeting dates for 2024: February 5, April 8, June 10, August 12, October 7, and December 9.

ADJOURNMENT—With no further business to conduct, the Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 10:10 a.m.

NEXT CJAB MEETING: Monday, February 5, 2024, 9:00 a.m., MH/ID/EI

